

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing isocyanurate-containing polyisocyanates by at least partly trimerizing (cyclo)aliphatic diisocyanates, which comprises carrying out the reaction in the presence of at least one trimerization catalyst selected from the group consisting essentially of the ammonium salts, substituted by four hydrocarbon radicals, of α -hydroxy-carboxylates.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A process for preparing isocyanurate-containing polyisocyanates by at least partly trimerizing (cyclo)aliphatic diisocyanates, which comprises using, as the trimerization catalyst, at least one compound of the formula (I)



where

R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , R^5 and R^6 may each independently be the same or different and are each a straight-chain or branched C_1 - to C_{20} -alkyl group, an optionally substituted C_5 - to C_{12} -cycloalkyl group, an optionally substituted C_7 - to C_{10} -aralkyl group, or an optionally substituted C_6 - C_{12} -aryl group, or

two or more of the R^1 to R^4 radicals together form a 4-, 5- or 6-membered alkylene chain or, together with a nitrogen atom, form a 5- or 6-membered ring which ~~may also contain~~ optionally contains an additional nitrogen or oxygen atom as a bridge member, or together form a multimembered, ~~preferably six-membered~~, polycyclic system, ~~preferably bicyclic system~~, which ~~may also contain~~ optionally contains one or more additional nitrogen atoms, oxygen atoms or oxygen and nitrogen atoms as bridge members, and

R⁵ and R⁶ may additionally be hydrogen, or C₁-C₂₀-alkyl or C₆- to C₁₂-aryl, each optionally interrupted by one or more oxygen and/or sulfur atoms and/or one or more substituted or unsubstituted imino groups, or substituted by functional groups, aryl, alkyl, aryloxy, alkyloxy, halogen, heteroatoms and/or heterocycles.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 2, wherein the R¹ to R⁴ radicals are each independently selected from the group consisting essentially of methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, n-butyl, tert-butyl, phenyl and benzyl.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim ~~2~~ ~~or 3~~, wherein the R⁵ and R⁶ radicals are each independently selected from the group consisting essentially of hydrogen, methyl, ethyl, n-propyl, n-butyl, phenyl, 2-carboxyethyl and 2-hydroxyethyl.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim ~~1~~ ~~or 2~~, wherein the ammonium ion is selected from the group consisting essentially of tetraoctylammonium, tetramethylammonium, tetraethylammonium, tetra-n-butylammonium, trimethylbenzylammonium, triethylbenzylammonium, tri-n-butylbenzylammonium, trimethylethylammonium, tri-n-butylethylammonium, triethylmethylammonium, tri-n-butylmethylammonium, diisopropyldiethylammonium, diisopropylethylmethylammonium, diisopropylethyl-benzylammonium, N,N-dimethylpiperidinium, N,N-dimethylmorpholinium, N,N-di-methylpiperazinium and N-methyldiazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim ~~1~~ ~~or 2~~, wherein the α -hydroxycarboxylate ion is selected from the group consisting essentially of the anions of glycolic acid (hydroxyacetic acid), lactic acid, citric acid, 2-methylactic acid (α -

hydroxyisobutyric acid), 2-hydroxy-2-methylbutyric acid, 2-hydroxy-2-ethylbutyric acid, 2-hydroxy-3-methylbutyric acid, 2-hydroxycaproic acid, malic acid, tartaric acid, glucuronic acid, gluconic acid, citramalic acid, saccharic acid, ribonic acid, benzilic acid, quinic acid, mandelic acid, hexahydromandelic acid, 2-hydroxycaproic acid and 3-phenyllactic acid.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the trimerization catalyst is deactivated after the desired degree of trimerization has been attained.

Claim 8 (Original): The process according to claim 7, wherein the trimerization catalyst is deactivated with dibutyl phosphate or di(2-ethylhexyl) phosphate.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the said diisocyanates ~~used are those which~~ have a total chlorine content of less than 100 ppm by weight.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The process according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the diisocyanates ~~used are~~ selected from the group consisting of hexamethylene 1,6-diisocyanate, ~~and/or~~ 1-isocyanato-3-isocyanatomethyl-3,5,5-trimethylcyclohexane and mixtures thereof.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): ~~The use of~~ A method of using ammonium salts, substituted by four hydrocarbon radicals, of α -hydroxycarboxylates as a trimerization catalyst for isocyanates.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): ~~The use of~~ A method of using the polyisocyanates obtainable according to any of claims 1 to 10 prepared from Claim 1 for producing polyurethane coatings, for polyurethane dispersions and adhesives, and as a polyisocyanate component in one- and two-component polyurethane systems for high-grade, weather-resistant polyurethane coatings and high-solids coatings.